

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

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NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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SUBJECT: CAP PRESS CONFERENCE DECEMBER 11, 1973

SUMMARY: DECEMBER 11, 1973, AD PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ (CAP), SHOWN UNOFFICIALLY TO HAVE BEEN ELECTED PRESIDENT IN DECEMBER 9 POLLING, GAVE FIRST PRESS CONFERENCE SINCE ELECTION DAY. PEREZ HAS NOT AS YET BEEN OFFICIALLY PROCLAIMED WINNER, BUT HIS STATEMENTS ARE BEING TREATED BY HIS PARTY AND MEDIA AS MAJOR POLICY PREDICTIONS FOR HIS ADMINISTRATION. AMONG OTHER MATTERS (THOSE REGARDING PETROLEUM BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY) CAP ASSURED HE WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S. BUT DEMANDED MORE JUST ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TREATMENT, PROMISED TO MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS AND NOT TURN BACK CLOCK TO EARLIER PERIOD, SAID THAT IT IS CUBA'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ARRANGE CONDITIONS FOR RENEWED RELATIONS AND THAT VENEZUELA SHOULD NOT ACT UNILATERALLY, AND PROMISED GOOD RELATIONS WITH COLOMBIA AND EVERY EFFORT TO RESOLVE BORDER DIFFICULTIES INCLUDING PUBLICIZING DETAILS OF NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. RELATIONS WITH U.S.- CAP SAID HIS DUTY IS TO ARRANGE FOR CORDIAL

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES AND ESPECIALLY WITH U.S.

WHICH "LIKE IT OR NOT IS OUR PRINCIPAL CUSTOMER, IS LOCATED WITHIN OUR CONTINENT AND POLITICALLY SPEAKING IS A REALITY WE CANNOT IGNORE. I SHALL NOT TAKE PART IN ANY ATTITUDE DESIGNED TO GENERATE STRATEGIC ILL-WILL AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATE, BUT WE SHALL ASSUME A VERY SERIOUS POLICY OF DEMANDING FROM THAT GREAT COUNTRY MORE JUST TREATMENT WITH REGARD TO THE RESPECT WE ARE OWED AS A NATION AND WITH REGARD TO ECONOMIC INTERESTS WE ARE DEFENDING." HE CONCLUDED HIS STATEMENT ON U.S. BY SAYING HE BELIEVED THAT "IN EFFECT THE POLICY OF MR. NIXON HAS NOT BEEN A HAPPY ONE FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN CONTINENT AND THAT VENEZUELAN AND LATIN AMERICANS HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE IRKED AND RESENTFUL AT THAT POLICY."

2. RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST AND OTHER COUNTRIES.- CAP SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WILL NOT LIMIT RELATIONS WITH ANY COUNTRY NOR WILL HE MODIFY RELATIONS ALREADY ESTABLISHED WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS. HE SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WILL TRY TO CREATE A PATTERN OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER LATIN COUNTRIES TO PERMIT A JOINT STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC NECESSITIES.

3. RELATIONS WITH CUBA.- CAP SAID HE DOES NOT REGARD "AS IMPOSSIBLE OR INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE COUNTRY TO REESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH CUBA"; HOWEVER, HE REPEATED AN EARLIER FORMULATION THAT IT IS CUBA'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ESTABLISH CONDITIONS FOR SUCH RELATIONS. CAP EXPLAINED VENEZUELA WAS THE INJURED AND AGGRIEVED PARTY AT THE TIME OF THE BREAK AND ADDED, " VENEZUELA SHOULD NOT ASSUME THE RISK, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BREAKING UNILATERALLY THIS AGREEMENT (I.E., THE OAS RESOLUTION) BECAUSE THIS WOULD BRING ABOUT IN AN IRREPARABLE WAY THE TOTAL BREAKDOWN OF THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM." HE SAID A UNILATERAL DECISION BY VENEZUELA IS, THEREFORE, NOT APPROPRIATE.

4. RELATIONS WITH COLOMBIA.- CAP SAID HE WILL WORK FOR CORDIAL RELATIONS WITH COLOMBIA BASED ON MUTUAL ECONOMIC AND OTHER BENEFITS AND WILL TAKE ALL POSSIBLE STEPS TO RESOLVE DIFFERENCES OVER GULF OF VENEZUELA. HOWEVER, HE FIRMLY BACKED STANCE OF PRESIDENT CALDERA, WHICH HE NOTED HE HAS SUPPORTED. HE ADDED, "I WOULD HOPE THAT BEFORE THE END OF PRESIDENT CALDERA'S/ ADMINISTRATION THE CONFLICT WILL BE RESOLVED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF VENEZUELA'S ASPIRATIONS. IF THIS DOES NOT OCCUR THEN I SHALL

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LIFT THE SECRECY OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND LET THE VENEZUELAN PEOPLE KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IS HAPPENING. "CAP SAID A SPECIAL COMMISSION WILL BE DEVELOPED TO ADVISE HIM ON THE MATTER AND EXPRESSED ASSURANCES THAT THERE ARE BASES FOR A FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT. HE ALSO SAID THAT HIS PLEDGE TO LIFT THE VEIL OF SECRECY DOES NOT IMPLY ANY CRITICISM OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT, "BUT IN VIEW OF THE AMOUNT OF CONFUSION THAT HAS ARISEN ABOUT THIS PROBLEM, I SHALL SEE TO IT THAT THERE IS MORE UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF ALL SECTORS

IN VENEZUELA ABOUT THIS DIFFERENCE."

5. TEXT OF PRESS CONFERENCE IS CARRIED IN FBIS PANAMA PICKUP
DTG 120445Z DEC. 73, AND EMBASSY IS POUCHING SPANISH TEXT TO
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